



Chasing Windmills

By Catherine Ryan Hyde

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From the bestselling author of **Pay It Forward** comes a provocative and unlikely love story that starts on a New York subway car and blossoms under the windmills of the Mojave Desert. Both Sebastian and Maria live in worlds ruled by fear. Sebastian, a lonely seventeen-year-old, is suffocating under his dominant father's control; Maria, a young mother of two, is trying to keep peace at home despite her boyfriend's abuse. When their eyes meet across a subway car one night, these two strangers find a connection that neither can explain or ignore. They dream of a new future and agree to run away together, only to find that each has kept a major secret from the other. In this tremendously moving novel, Catherine Ryan Hyde shows us how two people trapped by life's circumstances can break free and find a place in the world where love is genuine and selfless.

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Chasing Windmills By Catherine Ryan Hyde Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

In the simple and captivating latest from *Pay It Forward* author Hyde, a chance encounter proves life-changing for two lonely New York City subway riders. Four months shy of 18, Sebastian Mundt has been held a virtual prisoner by his father since his mother died: his father home-schools him and doesn't let him have outside relationships. One night, with his father heavily sedated by his sleeping pill, Sebastian sneaks out to ride the subway and locks eyes with Maria Arquette, a young mother who is caught in an abusive marriage. The two share an instant connection and take to meeting on the subway almost nightly and tentatively planning a future in the California desert town that Sebastian remembers from childhood, where thousands of windmills stretch out across the horizon. Hyde gracefully alternates between Sebastian's and Maria's perspectives with gentle nods to this New York love story's precursors (Maria obsessively watches *West Side Story*). It is their voices—at once utterly credible and heartbreakingly naïve—that make the book, and while this is being billed as an adult novel, its closest stylistic relative is S.E. Hinton's YA classic *The Outsiders*. (Mar.)

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From [Booklist](#)

Sebastian is a few months shy of 18, while Maria is in her early twenties with two children, yet they both ride the subway in the middle of the night to escape the pressure of their lives: Sebastian's overly intellectual and oppressively Luddite father, Maria's abusive boyfriend and recent firing from a grocery store. When their eyes meet, it's fate. Though it takes weeks upon weeks before they learn each other's last names, the subway meetings turn into love. Maria imagines it's just like her favorite movie, *West Side Story*. But as everyone knows, *West Side Story* is a tragedy, and Maria and Sebastian have to free themselves from difficult situations to avoid ending up like the original Maria and Tony. Hyde, whose novel *Pay It Forward* (2000) was made into a movie, stretches the relationship between Sebastian and his father a bit too far, but the reader will gladly allow it in exchange for the lovers' tense and electrifying meetings on the subway. --Hilary Hatton

Review

"Simple and captivating. It is [the characters'] voices—at once utterly credible and heartbreakingly naïve—that make the book." —*Publishers Weekly* "A sweet tale openly modeled on *West Side Story* . . . centering on how people come to grip with their pasts." —*Kirkus Reviews* "A reimagining of the classic tale of star-crossed lovers . . . but fresh and new. . . . A page-turning read. . . . The distinct voices are sweet, soul-baring, and honest. Hyde writes evocatively of the visceral nature of first love." —*School Library Journal*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

George Carter:

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